THE FLORIDA AGRICULTURIST

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO STATE INTERESTS

LAMON-SO

VOL. XXXIII No. 15 Jacksonville and DeLand, Fla., Wednesday, April 18, 1906. Whole No. 1644.

The Silo From the Dairyman's Standpoint.

Have you a silo? If not, are you planning to build one in time to have it ready for filling this season? If not, why not? Of course this means in case you are a dairyman or stockman. It is the most important modern device for the benefit of all cattlemen. A correspondent of Successful Farming says:

The silo is without doubt the factor that will to a greater extent reduce the cost of milk and fat, than any other appliance or system known to the dairymen of today. The best proof we have that the silo is a "winner" is the fact that not more than five men in a thousand who build one and feed silage one season, conclude they have made a mistake and undertake to continue their business without its use.

Life is too short to demonstrate the worth of each particular method that may be adopted in our business hence it is wisdom on our part to conclude that where the evidence is so overwhelmingly favorable as it is to the silo that it must be all right and the proper thing to do is to fall into line, build a silo, strive to produce first-class silage, study the methods of successful dairymen and produce butterfat at a cost that will leave a satisfactory profit.

An abundance of good silage enables the dairyman to offer his cows a ration throughout the winter months as palatable, as satisfying and from which they will produce more pounds of butterfat than they will from the average pasture in the same number of days.

To many who know nothing of the value of silage as food for the dairy cow, this no doubt will sound like a wild statement. But it is nevertheless a fact and has been demonstrated many times.

A few of the advantages of the silo may be mentioned.

It provides the most economical method of storing the corn crop or that portion of it desired for cattle food.

It enables the dairymen to use a winter feed equal to summer pasture and a summer supply will make it possible for him to hold up the milk flow when pastures are short and flies "busy."

With its use the bulk of the dairy work will be done during the winter months when higher prices prevail, thus increasing the cash income from this branch of our farm operations.

The carrying capacity of the farm will be doubled. More stock, more manure, more feed, more stock—what the limit would be if any of us know. Of this I am convinced, that with the general use of the silo the productiveness of our farms would be so increased that the question "How shall we keep our boys at home?" would be solved. Build a silo.

Silo Talk by a Veteran.

The following is another article in this subject from the same paper:

Among the conclusions I have arrived at, after using the silo for twenty years is, that it is always best, when finishing the filling, to leave the center several feet higher than at the sides. This appears at first to leave more surface exposed, but really does not, for, in settling the contents press more firmly against the sides at the same time leveling in the center. If left level on the surface, the center settles most and loosens from the walls, permitting air to enter and is likely to lead to loss. Have a latter variety of corn to finish with or wet the silage with water as it is spread in the silo during the several last loads and fifty to seventy-five pails of water on the covering when it is put on. Wet sawdust is the best covering I have ever used. When the filling is piled up four feet higher in the center than at the sides, sloping to the sides, tramping firmly to make it all as solid as possible, smooth off evenly and throw on the sawdust.

There is usually (not always) a little silage spoiled and by shoveling the sawdust off, this decayed leathery surface may be removed without leaving anything objectionable. The covering resolves itself to this: If the last of the filling dries out by evaporation from the heat, which always develops, that much will be spoiled and a little additional, for, if left several months, the silage will coat over with a leathery mould formation, which will be where it is sufficiently moist. So the amount of water added is that amount to restrain a saturated degree of wetness in the covering and that amount will be governed by the kind of material used as a covering. Freshly threshed straw or chaff will develop quite a degree of heat within itself. Perhaps because of being so open it evaporates a considerable quantity of water, but old partially decayed straw will retain moisture better, while wet sawdust, if saturated thoroughly, will give off moisture very slowly.

The quantity of silage eaten by the animals will be governed by the acidity it contains and this depends upon the maturity of the crop. To feed liberally of silage in case of a shortage of hay, let the corn stand until matured but not weatherbeaten and bleached, when very likely a little water will need be added as it is spread in the silo from the cutter to give it sufficient moisture. I have had a single cow eat more than one hundred pounds each day continuously for two weeks. Two-thirds of the grain had been removed. This is to say she ate a bushel and a half basket full with four pounds of wheat bran additional and did well on it, showing not a single symptom of any kind of disorder nor anything any time following.

Sour silage from immature corn is not palatable to animals. They will not eat very much and it disarranges the digestive organs, as the feeding liberally of raw potatoes does.

To wet the silage with water one needs a tank with a hose attached and do the wetting as the spreading is done for this distributes the water more evenly. Some may say it is nonsense to talk about using water but we have not found it so in the least, in fact, some of the very best silage is made by that method. Neighbors may be exchanging work if you are not able to hire sufficient help and the first corn is not put in when fit, making the last cutting late. It may be too dry and the moisture question governs the matter of quality, and quality is first. Quality is also governed somewhat by the equal distribution of the heavy and light portions, also by tramping thoroughly, expelling the air as we fill the silo.

The diameter of the silo is also very important in controlling quality, for if lacking a little in moisture and the surface is not removed rapidly enough in warm weather, even in weather as we have had this winter, it may form white mouldy spots just far enough ahead of the feeding to become an annoyance with no remedy at hand and where any form of mould is permitted to remain it is likely to increase very rapidly.

The Way to Raise Colts.

The Tribune Farmer published an article which contains several valuable hints. The picture, which we cannot reproduce, shows a large colt, as the man is said to be five feet ten inches high, the colt must have been as tall as the average of horses, at five months old, for standing, in a natural position, its head was considerably above that of the man.

Rearing a filly which, at the age of five months, shall look like the accompanying picture, and which is just as good as she looks, can scarcely be done except by a genuine lover of horseflesh. Stella, the subject of the picture, was foaled April 4, 1905, and a large colt at birth. Her sire is a well-bred and well-built Percheron whose colts are greatly in request at good prices, and his sire was an imported horse, whose colts were remarkable for stability and endurance. The colt's dam is young, not pure-bred, but a good road horse of pleasant disposition and good size, and she proved a good mother, Stella being her first colt. The youngster had no serious setbacks and never ceased to grow as long as I owned her. The picture was taken September 5th, and is a perfect representation. The man who holds her is about five feet ten inches in height. Thus one can judge comparatively the size of the filly. This man is the one to whom she owes her fine growth and sleek coat. The horses which he drives are always satin-smooth, and the colt was an especial pet with him. She was like a baby to the whole family, petted and caressed and fed salt and sugar from our hands, yet she never contracted a vicious habit, nor had tricks which were annoying. If her future training is as kind as that which she received while I owned her she will make the much-quoted "kind family horse." I sold her at seven months old.

She began taking a nibble from her mother's grain box when very young. Later she had a little box of her own, where she found a light ration of bran and oats. Salt was always within easy reach, and water when she cared for it. The work horses made a pet of her and she ran in pasture with them in perfect safety, or, when all the horses were working, she went to pasture with my hornless dairy cows, and neither she nor they suffered from the association.

Colt raising is a little risky and could not be included in a woman's farm unless there was a man who could be trusted fully; but with good fences and patient, painstaking care it yields a rather better profit than cattle raising, except where one has registered stock; and the chances of really good sales of pure bred cattle are small, unless one shows them at the great exhibitions, which is very expensive advertising for women farmers. Young horses of good size, which are kind and well broken, nearly always command good prices and are always in demand.

Breeding from vicious parents will rarely give the sort of horses which the majority like. Breeding from trotting stock will not produce the sort of horses which farmers and others, who need real work from their teams, want. Study the sort of horse you can sell and when the colts arrive take good care of them.

Some Ideas to Think Over.

The Indiana Farmer published an article which we quote as follows:

Among the good things we have read recently is a lecture on Country and City, by that practico-theoretic agricultural professor at Cornell University, L. H. Bailey. The lecture was delivered in Boston, in a series of four, last January. The series is published in book form by the MacMillan Company, New York, price $1.00, and should have a place in every farmer's library. As our custom is, in reading such a book, we marked certain passages that seemed most worthy of note, and will quote from them. Prof. B. is an enthusiastic lover of Nature, and thinks there is no calling to compare with that of the farmer, wherein he is doubtless correct; but this passion for outdoor life has a tendency to warp one's judgment in regard to the city and its dwellers. Some of us must stay within city walls and abide by city disabilities whether we will or no.

But let Prof. Bailey talk. He shows how much the city is dependent on the farm. "Cut off the traffic in milk and water and other supplies from the country for 24 hours and Boston will be in distress. Your shops and theatres will close; your trolley-cars will